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ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Network (CECEN), established in 1971, had three main components: (1) information dissemination at the district level, (2) district training plans for parents, teachers and administrators, and (3) monitoring reports from each district on the effectiveness of its activities. A fourth component, the provision of special speech and hearing services to preschool children was added in 1972. This report provides end-of-year, 1974-75, status information on the program as regards the general enabling objectives, the objectives for each component, and end of year surveys of the Network Resource Teachers and Program Manager. The general enabling objectives of the program were met. Various planning documents were submitted and committee meetings were held which constituted evidence of attainment. (Author/RC)

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THE COMPREHENSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION NETWORK 1974-75

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

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Report # 7620

July, 1975

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ABSTRACT

The Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Network (CECEN), established in 1971, had three main components: (1) information dissemination at the district level, (2) district training plans for parents, teachers and administrators, and (3) monitoring reports from each district on the effectiveness of its activities. A fourth component, the provision of special speech and hearing services to pre-school children, was added in 1972. This report provides end-of-year, 1974-75, status information on the program as regards the general enabling objectives, the objectives for each component, and end-of-year surveys of the Network Resource Teachers and Program Manager.

The general enabling objectives of the program were met. Various planning documents were submitted and committee meetings were held which constituted evidence of attainment.

Specific Objectives by Component:

In reviewing District Dissemination Plans it appeared that several District Advisory Councils (DAC's) concurred on some effective methods of publicizing information about early childhood education and about the program. These methods were effectively implemented by the districts.

Many districts used workshops to provide parents with information and training to help their children at home. In ten of the twelve schools visited there was generally good parent attendance at training sessions.

Parent classroom volunteers appeared regularly in six of the twelve schools. For those parents who participated in this activity the results appeared to be beneficial to the parent and the school.

According to the Monitoring Reports parents were affected positively by training in the program, and their own awareness about early childhood education information increased.

According to the Program Manager of the Speech and Hearing Clinic the objectives were all met. From documents submitted and also according to interviews with staff and parents the program was beneficial to the children and parents it served.

Network Resource Teachers and the Program Manager stated in interviews that parents gained considerable skills and became more comfortable in schools as a result of the program. They also indicated that due to the program, there were more parents in schools, and that schools were positively affected by parent participation.

CECEN in 1974-1975 met its general and component objectives in almost every respect. Due to increased levels of parent and staff experience, not only the DAC's, but CECEN staff as well were able to transact operations more effectively. Even without funding next year, it is expected that there will be some schools continuing the program on their own to continue the kind of parent participation they have found beneficial to the school and community.

THE
COMPREHENSIVE
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
NETWORK
1974-75

INTRODUCTION

A. Program Description

The Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Network (CECEN) began July 1, 1971, with funding from the United States Office of Education (Title III of E.S.E.A.). CECEN was to work within existing programs and projects in early childhood education in Philadelphia and to increase acceptance and use of greater staff, parental and community participation in early childhood education. A Speech and Hearing Component was attached to the program after its original formulation.

The program had three main components: (1) Information dissemination at the district level to make parents, teachers and other staff and community members more aware of information and resources in early childhood education (2) A training plan for parents, teachers and administrators developed by each district in order to make better use of the information that was disseminated (3) So that the effectiveness of the district information and training plans would be documented, a monitoring report from each district reviewed the program activities in the district.

A goal of the program was that from involvement in these different program functions, parents and community members should

be able to: (1) identify alternative teaching approaches in early childhood education, (2) help make the existing programs relevant to the needs of their particular school and community, (3) increase their participation in schools and classrooms as volunteers, (4) develop effective methods to promote additional parent support of and influence on early childhood programs.

CECEN was involved in all of the eight public school districts and in the parochial schools. The overall project had a City-wide Early Childhood Advisory Council (CECAC) comprised of the parent chairpersons of local District Advisory Councils (DAC's). The DAC's worked with their respective District Superintendents: (1) in developing and implementing a District Dissemination Plan through which word about the program was conveyed to both target schools and the district, and (2) in writing and approving target school training plans to provide professional training in those schools.

B. Planned Evaluation

A full-time evaluator worked on this year's evaluation according to a design developed in conjunction with the Program Manager and the Manager of the Early Childhood Evaluation Unit.

The evaluator selected twelve schools (eight public, four parochial) for in-depth observation. They were selected as a stratified random sample among the target schools (one school for each public district, and one parochial school for each of four funding levels). For evaluation purposes, emphasis was placed on training sessions, classroom observations and interviews of participants.

In February, 1975 the Program Evaluator prepared an Interim Report reflecting the implementation of the entire program and planned activities.

The final report was planned to cover the programs conducted by the twelve schools chosen for in-depth evaluation, the evaluation reports prepared by each of the eighty-five schools involved in the program, the program objectives, district monitoring reports, and interviews conducted both of participants in the twelve schools and of the Network Resource Teachers and the Program Manager.

The body of the report will be divided into the following sections: I. General Enabling Objectives, II. Specific Program Components, III. The Pre-School Speech and Hearing Program, IV. Interviews with Network Resource Teachers and the Program Manager, V. Summary and Conclusions.

I. GENERAL ENABLING OBJECTIVES FOR CECEN

The following presents program objectives and indications of the extent to which they were attained.

1. The City-wide Early Childhood Advisory Committee (CECAC) will meet six times during the 1974-75 school year, with other meetings scheduled as necessary. At those regular meetings, reports from each District Advisory Council and from the Program Director will be made. Minutes of these meetings will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

   These meetings have been held according to schedule. Meetings were held October 4, November 1, December 6, January 3, February 7, March 14, April 11, and on May 23, for a total of eight. The minutes indicated that each DAC and the program manager reported at these meetings.

2. The CECAC will review the District Dissemination Plans (DDP) produced by each school district by October 1, 1975 to ascertain whether they fulfill the requirement set by the grant guidelines. Minutes of these review meetings will serve to verify the fulfillment of this objective.

   This was done according to the CECAC minutes; all DDP's were approved at the October 5, CECAC meeting.

3. The CECAC will review the District Training Plans prepared by each individual school district by October 26, 19 to ascertain whether they fulfill the requirements set by the grant guidelines. Minutes of these review meetings will serve to verify the fulfillment of this objective.

This was done on time by some of the schools. The rest fulfilled the objective in November, 1974.

4. The Executive Director of Early Childhood Programs will attend the six regular meetings of the CECAC during the school year 1974-75. Examination of his calendar by the evaluator will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

The Executive Director of Early Childhood Programs attended four of the regular meetings of the CECAC during the school year 1974-75.

5. The Program Manager is responsible for supervision of the Network Resource Teachers (NRT's). He will work with these staff members at the District and Central levels. He will be responsible for informing CECAC, the NRT's, the DAC's and other persons and groups working in and with the program of useful and necessary information for their operations. He will be responsible for coordinating the work of the DAC's, the NRT's, and the District Superintendent with respect to the CECEN program. He will receive reports from his staff as needed, meeting with them on a weekly basis. He will report to the DAC's as needed and to the CECAC at its regular meetings. Minutes of CECAC and DAC meetings, questionnaires to the DAC's, the NRT's, and the District Superintendents, and the evaluator's attendance at and observation of some staff meetings will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

This has been done. The Program Manager has met with the NRT's on Fridays for staff development. He has reported to the DAC's as needed, and attended and reported at all CECAC meetings. He also received reports from them at these meetings. The evaluator has also attended these meetings.

6. The Program Director must adhere to the Inter-system agreement and federal guidelines which provide:

   1. for 25% of all services to be allotted to the Parochial School System.
   2. for 20% of all services to be directed toward special eduction needs.

The Program Manager wrote the following report (Table A) which verified that this objective was met.

TABLE A

Amounts of CECEN Funds Spent by Each Public School District and the Phila lelphia Parochial School System Both Totally and for Special Education

DISTRICT	TOTAL AMOUNT SPENT	AMOUNT SPENT ON SPECIAL EDUCATION	SPECIAL EDUCATION % OF TOTAL
A	8,206	2,602	32
B	7,064	1,602	23
C	7,365	1,218	17
D	8,110	1,675	21
E	5,940	1,946	33
F	5,535	2,159	39
G	6,548	1,335	20
H	4,992	1,447	29
Public Total	53,760	13,984	26
Parochial Total	37,931	8,662	23
Grand Total	91,691	22,646	25

Note:

Parochial Schools received $37.9 thousand in direct payment, $24,800 in services from CECEN personnel (manager, evaluator, secretarial, Pre-School Speech and Hearing and NRT's), a $5.9 thousand charge for fringe benefits and $2.8 thousand for materials, supplies, etc. Total amount for the ten parochial schools was $71,400. The total for CECEN was $282,700; therefore the total parochial school share was 25%.

7. The Program Manager must meet regularly with the Executive Director of Early Childhood Programs and with an official to be designated by the Parochial School System. Examination of the Program Manager's calendar by the evaluator will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

The Program Manager met with the Executive Director of Early Childhood Programs on a weekly basis and conferred with the parochial school system's liaison to the program on an average of once every two weeks.

8. The Program Manager must have included the DAC's in the planning process for the writing of the continuation grant unless the due date of that proposal is moved forward with less than six weeks notice. The objective will have been met if CECAC minutes show that at a CECAC meeting held prior to April 15, 1975, each DAC is given an opportunity to demonstrate the manner in which it would like to have the program changed.

This was done.

9. The Program Manager must attend at least two local meetings of each District Advisory Council. Examination of the Program Manager's calendar by the evaluator will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

The Program Manager attended all of the parochial DAC meetings, and at least two local DAC meetings in each public school district, except in one district where he attended only one.

10. The NRT will work with the District Superintendent and the District Advisory Council (DAC) in the district to which she

is assigned to formulate a District Dissemination Plan (DDP). This plan will be submitted to the CECAC by October 1, 1974. It will be corrected in accordance with the CECAC review and in final form by November 2, 1974. Receipt of the DDP's by the appointed dates by the evaluator will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

As noted above (see number 2), this occurred.

11. The NRT will assist the aforementioned in the implementation of that plan to the extent of two days per week. At least 20% of her efforts will be in the area of Special Education. Examination of the NRT's schedules and the DDP's by the evaluator will be the basis for assessment of this objective.

Examination of the DDP's and of the NRT's schedules revealed that this objective was met.

12. The evaluator will assist the Districts in writing behavioral objectives for their DDP's and District Training Plans (DTP's). The appearance of these objectives in the final form of the plans (which are respectively due November, 1974 and December, 1974) will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

As noted above, (see number 3), this occurred.

13. The NRT's will assist the DAC and the District Superintendent with the implementation of the District Training Plan (DTP) to the extent of the aforementioned two days per week. At least 20% of her efforts will be in the area of Special Education. Examination of the NRT's schedules and the DTP's

by the evaluator will be the basis for the assessment of this objective

Examination of the DTP's and the NRT's schedules revealed that this objective was met in 1974-75.

14. The evaluator will assist the Districts in writing behavioral objectives for their DDP's and DTP's. The appearance of these objectives in the final form of the plans (which are respectively due November 2, 1974 and December 7, 1974) will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

As noted earlier, these plans were done on schedule (see numbers 2 and 3).

15. The evaluator will submit an interim report by February 1, 1975. Availability of this on the dissemination date, March 1, 1975 will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

This was done (see Atkins, 1975).

16. The evaluator will submit a final report by August 1, 1975. Availability of this on the dissemination date (September 3, 1975) will serve to verify fulfillment of this objective.

This report fulfills that objective.

II. SPECIFIC PROGRAM COMPONENTS

A. Information Dissemination

The program met most of the objectives of the dissemination plans and it also managed to disseminate a considerable amount of information. One of the most effective dissemination vehicles was the training component through which guest speakers were invited to discuss new information about early childhood education with parents and teachers. The District Advisory Councils also invited guest speakers to perform this function.

Eight districts and the parochial schools listed and met the following four major objectives:

(a) Newsletters - planned and issued by five districts.

(b) Conferences at the district level - planned and held by the parochial school and six public school districts.

(c) News articles were submitted to school or local papers by three districts instead of five as planned.

(d) Three districts kept the Home and School Association informed about the program as planned.

B. Training

District plans submitted by all eight districts and the parochial schools included: scheduling training sessions, workshops or visits; and incorporating ideas learned from training into classroom functioning. Twelve schools were selected by stratified random sampling as

described above. What follows is based on the evaluator's observations in visits to these schools. In visiting these schools three instruments were used.

1) A Training Session Observation Checklist (Appendix A) to determine whether the training given actually corresponded to the session title and whether or not participants were involved.

2) A Classroom Observation Checklist (Appendix B) - to determine how parent volunteers were used in classrooms.

3) Interviews and Questionnaires (Appendices C,D,E) based on abbreviated forms of prior instruments used with principals, teachers and parents. Principals and teachers were interviewed informally. Parents whose classes were observed were also interviewed.

(1) Training Session Observation Checklist

To determine whether the training given actually corresponded to the session title, the topic of the session was listed with a descriptive comment about the session. In the training sessions attended by the evaluator, speakers generally did discuss information pertinent to the topic. To determine whether or not participants were involved several questions were asked: (a) the number of participants asking questions, (b) the number of participants answering questions, (c) the number of participants offering suggestions,

(d) the number offering solutions to problems, and (e) whether the workshop required participants to construct some form of instructional material.

In summarizing the results gathered via the Training Session Observation Checklist, these were some of the major findings:

Most of the training sessions seemed to focus on ways for parents to solve existing problems in students' behavior and on basic or readiness skills.

A total of 245 parents attended the sessions. The average number of parents who attended, based on one or more visits per school was 20 and the mean number of staff attending was eight (paid aides were counted as staff in addition to regular school personnel and group leaders).

In most instances the information given was new to the parents according to their reactions. The sessions were interesting enough in most instances to hold the attention of the participants.

The mean number of parents who asked questions during the training sessions was two. Usually, the participants did not offer suggestions or solutions to problems.

(2) Classroom Observation Checklist

To determine how parent volunteers were used in classrooms, the evaluator visited the classrooms and used a Classroom Observation Checklist. One of the chief concerns here was, whether or not parents were being "exploited", that is, were they only relegated to performing menial tasks in the classroom? As a guide for ascertaining this, checklist items focused on the kinds of tasks parents could be engaged in: clerical work; cleaning up and arranging materials; school activities outside the classroom; handling discipline problems apart from instruction; planning instruction with the teacher; instructing the whole class; instructing small groups; instructing individual children (tutoring).

What follows is a summary of the observations in the twelve schools:

No parents were observed doing menial tasks.

Usually one parent worked with a class.

Half the number of parents who volunteered worked with students outside the classroom.

Most parents worked with an average number of students per group.

The subject that parents most often helped with was reading.

The medium most often used by parents who helped students was books.

An average of one child in five in the class was asked to pay attention by parent volunteers.

According to the training plans submitted by the remaining seventy-three schools, scheduling of training sessions, workshops or visits was done. Most of the schools mentioned these four objectives:

To build better communication between home and school
To make parents aware of early childhood development
To involve more parents in our schools
To improve students' basic skills with parental help

Virtually all of the 56 schools that reported indicated that they met their objectives. One of the weak areas of the program was that it did not involve as many parents as program coordinators, program staff and parents in target schools would have liked, but for those parents who did participate the involvement was rewarding for them and the schools and indirectly for children also.

Parents observed in the classroom were usually involved

in some subject related activity. It was not possible to estimate the average amount of time parents volunteered per week for several reasons, the most important one being that some parents did not volunteer regularly. Attendance varied from week to week in four schools out of twelve. Also, the number of parents who volunteered time tended to dwindle steadily for these schools. However, in the other eight schools visited parents did attend.

The Monitoring Report gave another form of feedback to determine how well the program components worked (training, dissemination and the DAC's) in the districts. Also, it told how the district was affected (if it was affected) by these components. The Monitoring Report also indicated the impact of the program on parent involvement. Some of the most common findings reported were: that training in the districts went as planned according to the reports; that parents felt more welcome in schools and that dissemination improved.

(3) Interviews and Questionnaires

To determine the effect of training on parents, Interviews and Questionnaires (Appendices C,D,E) were used with principals, teachers and parents. Two questions were addressed to 12 parents: to name the kinds of training sessions attended this year and state whether or not the sessions were valuable to them. The response to the first question further emphasized a previously mentioned finding, that the sessions seemed to focus on methods for parents to solve problems in students' behavior and methods toward improving basic or readiness skills. In reference to the second question, parents reported that training sessions were valuable to them in working with children in class and in working with children at home.

Half of the teachers (six of twelve) reported that parents who worked with them in class were very helpful and that parents had learned additional skills. Some teachers felt that parents who worked with them were helpful but were sporadic in attendance. As a result the teachers responded that they were unable to determine the impact of training on parents at that time. In two of the schools visited teachers were not interviewed; in one school, the evaluator was unable to arrange a classroom visit despite efforts to do so; in the other, the evaluator was not able to make a visit, but the school did not have classroom parent volunteers.

Principals were also asked about the effects of training on parents. Most of them (seven of twelve) responded that parents were better informed and more competent as a result of training in the Early Childhood Network. Some principals (three of twelve) reported that parents attended training sessions but there was great difficulty getting parents to come as volunteers. Two principals, however, said parents gave excellent help in their schools.

III. PRE-SCHOOL SPEECH AND HEARING COMPONENT

This component of the program was the only one that provided direct services to children. It was established on August 1, 1972 for pre-school children (age three to five) in the form of special clinical services at the Special Education Diagnostic and Evaluation Center at 3236 Powelton Avenue. The program was to include diagnosis for a large number of children in addition to thirty who could be given diagnostic therapy during the year.

There were some changes in the program this year due to the opening of a new Speech and Hearing Clinic at Spruance School funded through Title VI ESEA. This second clinic was opened in response to a need indicated by a waiting list for therapy. As a result of the efforts needed to open the second clinic, some of the objectives were met at a slower rate than expected. For example, a considerable amount of the Program Manager's time was occupied with establishing the new clinic which did not allow time for diagnosis.

This meant that the therapist had to do all of the diagnostic work. In addition, a relatively larger portion of the Program Manager's time was spent reviewing referrals, visiting centers, schools and groups to discuss the program, contacting clinics and hospitals and working with parents.

The statements of objectives, which follow, indicate the nature of referrals, therapeutic strategy, and evaluation procedures practiced, as well as whether the objectives were attained.

1. At the end of the child's enrollment in the program, his parents or guardians were to continue the program of home stimulation. In order to encourage this, meetings (every two months) of parents and guardians were to be held by the Program Manager. Her reports to the Supervisor of Speech and Hearing served to verify fulfillment of this objective.

This objective has been modified because of the new demands placed on program personnel. A follow-up was done by means of parent workshops and meetings, conferences and telephone conferences. Two workshops were planned between February and June. The Supervisor of Speech and Hearing also verified that this objective was met. On a visit to the Speech and Hearing Clinic by the evaluator, the teachers held conferences with both parents to review the lesson to be done at home. The teachers also reported the child's

progress for that session.

2. Before the seventh therapy session, the therapist wrote up for the records a predicted improvement expectancy in the area of the child's handicap. The supervisor of Speech Correction verified that each of these was both reachable and nontrivial.

3. At least 70% of the children enrolled in the program who attended 20 therapy sessions met or exceeded the predicted improvement expectancy. Examination of the records served to verify fulfillment of this and the preceding objective.

4. The program began general diagnosis of three and four year old children referred to them by August, 1974 and a Teacher of Speech Correction began specific diagnosis of each child by September, 1974. Reports of diagnostic sessions were made to the Supervisor of Speech and Hearing on a weekly basis. These reports and records kept on diagnosed children served to verify fulfillment of this objective and the following objectives.

5. Each child diagnosed was examined for the following disorders:

a) apraxia
b) dysarthria
c) aphasia
d) delayed language
e) defective articulation
f) peripheral hearing impairment
g) auditory agnosia
h) disturbances of auditory perception

6. Fifteen children were accepted in the program by October, 1974. This was the Program Manager's responsibility. According to the Program Manager, 36 children have been tested since September, 1974. Each was tested for the disorders listed in Objective 5, above.

7. At least four of the enrolled children in each group of 15 were to have been referred to the program by the Parochial School System, i.e., to the Supervisor of Speech and Hearing by September, 1974 and by December, 1974. (This information was to be collected by the Program Manager). If referrals were not forthcoming by these dates, these allocations would be made available to the general public.

In a recent interview with the Evaluator, the Manager reported that the Parochial Schools were given this opportunity, but no referrals were forthcoming, so the information was made available to the general public. However, some of the children were from families where older children go to parochial schools.

8. At least one of the children whose parents or guardians expect to enroll them in public schools was to live within the boundaries of one of the eight public school districts. (This information was to be collected by the Program Manager). This requirement was regularly met.

9. Each child accepted for therapy into the program began therapy within one month of acceptance. Records kept by the Program Manager served to verify fulfillment of this objective.

10. The average child received 25 hours of therapy. The aforementioned records verified fulfillment of this objective and the following objective.

Because of the opening of a new clinic and because the Program Manager had not been involved in diagnosis, the therapist had to provide therapy by herself.

11. The Program Manager and the Teacher of Special Correction diagnosed enough children to have a new group of 15 ready to begin therapy by March, 1975.

12. One of the parents or guardians of a given child discussed the child's progress in his home stimulation program at home and received suggestions for the program from the Program Manager or the Teacher of Speech Correction. The Program Manager's reports to the Supervisor of Speech Correction served to verify fulfillment of this objective and the following objective.

13. The Program Manager provided in-service observation for individuals and groups of speech and hearing therapists as arranged.

14. The Program Manager spent approximately two hours per day coordinating the program: handling referrals, visiting centers, schools and groups to discuss the program, contacting clinics and hospitals, working with parents, etc. Reports to be made to the Supervisor of Speech and Hearing on a weekly basis served to verify fulfillment of this objective and the following objective.

Now, the Program Manager is able to devote almost all of her time to these activities. In expanding to the new

center the program has been rearranged so that there are now two full-time therapists. Thirty percent of the Program Manager's time was spent on this program and the remainder was spent on programs funded by other sources.

15. The Program Manager supervised the Teacher of Speech Correction.

As can be seen from the above, all the objectives for this component were met, even though there were problems for the Speech and Hearing Program Manager in organizing a new clinic while continuing to administer the existing one.

Two on-site visits were made to the Speech and Hearing Clinic to interview staff and parents (who were required to participate in each session) and to inspect the appropriate records regarding attainment of these objectives (Appendix F).

The Speech and Hearing Program Manager indicated that all of the objectives were now met. (As indicated in the Interim Report, all of the objectives were not reached by that time since the Program Manager was involved in opening a new Speech and Hearing Clinic from another funding source).

Two parents whose children attended the Speech and Hearing Clinic were interviewed by the evaluator. Both parents reported that the sessions were helpful to their children and that they worked at home with their children. Also,

both mothers said the teacher offered helpful solutions to problems their children had had with the lesson. The suggestion offered by one parent, and agreed with by another, was that the program should be better publicized so that more children could receive therapy.

IV. INTERVIEWS WITH RESOURCE TEACHERS AND PROGRAM MANAGER

A. Network Resource Teacher (NRT) Interviews

The following are paraphrases of responses made by the four NRT's to interview questions asked in the first week of June, 1975.

1. What effect has training had on parents involved in it?

Parents learned additional skills and learned about relationships with teachers. They also learned about working with children at home in addition to enjoying a rapport with other parents. Generally parents and their knowledge of early childhood development increased as a result of participating in the Network. Parents attitudes toward school, teachers, principals and educators changed. They became acquainted with the district staff and other personnel they might not otherwise have known and now they understand the staff's function better than they did previously. Parents involved in CECEN became more comfortable in schools. One of the main positive effects was that parents reported an improvement in their own children

as reported by the schools involved. CECEN parents also lobbied and protested to maintain on-going school programs such as Latin in elemementary schools and to prevent the closing of some schools. Also, the NRT in one District helped develop a proposal for funding a parent involvement and staff development program in non-target schools using some of the CECEN target schools as a model.

2. What effect has dissemination through the Network had on the target schools in your districts?

The effect varied according to how the DAC members spread the word since they (the DAC members) were on the executive board of the Home and School Council.

Information dissemination (including that which resulted from target school training programs) gave parents the confidence to offer themselves as volunteers in schools. As a result of dissemination about the program, the idea of asking parents to volunteer two hours for each hour of training was spread. This was often helpful in maintaining the "volunteer spirit" in the schools. Dissemination of information efforts gave the principal a chance to identify parents who would be willing to work. At several schools, parents have become especially interested in learning about and using educational

alternatives. And in all districts, leaders evolved as a result of the program.

3. What impact has the Network had on target schools in your districts?

Some schools have gained more parents as volunteers this year. Some of those involved in the program said the relationship between parents and principals improved. For example,some of the changes were that principals talked to parents with new-found respect and to parents principals appeared more human. One of the other effects of the program was that parents were no longer timid. Wherever teachers and parents worked together and wherever people actively talked about the program there was greater involvement. The program gave parents the opportunity to link up with district personnel and state and federal sources.

4. How many schools could you say would continue the program without funding next year?

The NRT's estimated that one-third to one-half of the public target schools would continue the program without funding next year.

5. Was the program successful? What were some of the good aspects of the program?

The NRT's felt that the program was generally successful. For example, it reached parents even

though it did not reach as many as it was hoped it would. However, it was felt that the parents who came benefited.

One of the problems of the program was that each NRT had to monitor classes, attend conferences and plan workshops in two districts. Participation was therefore doubly difficult. In addition, an NRT sometimes gave more attention to one distict at the expense of another.

One of the NRT's felt that the target schools should have been changed more frequently than they were.

The program was successful in helping parents become more confident in expressing their opinions. They discussed their own children's shortcomings more readily since the beginning of the program. And, at the least, they were more aware of new programs. As a result of their involvement in the program some parents pursued a higher education or better jobs. They seemed not to be afraid of these kinds of challenges more recently. Another one of the NRT's felt that although the program was successful parents did not raise an uproar about the program's demise since it didn't provide direct services to children. As an NRT, greater insight was gained into a larger educational process.

Below is a list that one NRT felt summarized the legacy of CECEN.

1. It established the need for a staff person to facilitate

parent and School District efforts in early childhood education. (No one was designated to fill that need upon CECEN's demise).

2. CECEN fostered leadership training and exposure that is helpful to pre-school teachers becoming leaders and getting better jobs.

3. The network fostered community involvement and pre-school parent awareness to help develop its program.

4. The program also supported more active Home and School organization participation in one district; in the other, the School District controlled the organization.

5. CECEN's efforts have partly contributed toward the increased efforts of secondary schools in striving toward greater program continuity for new students.

B. Program Manager Interview

The following paraphrases responses made by the Program Manager to interview questions asked during June 1975.

1. Was the program successful?

The program utilized dissemination plans and training sessions to fulfill its purpose. Training sessions served two functions; training and dissemination.

The District Advisory Council served chiefly as a disseminator of information about training sessions and conferences . The program distributed over 15,000 booklets on early childhood education programs. Of course, in our dissemination efforts there were still things that were left undone. For instance, some people still don't know the difference between the Pre-kindergarten Head Start and the Get Set Day Care programs. During the course of the program, parents attended sessions at the Durham School and at the Advisory Center for the Improvement of Education in District 6 for training rather than having CECEN staff doing the job as an additional means of disseminating information. One of the lessons learned about information dissemination was that books and periodicals were not nearly as effective as person to person contact.

The training program worked well in some places and poorly in others. However, one of the good results was that parents became more comfortable in schools. Another positive feature was that teachers and principals could now see parents as less of a threat.

CECEN co-sponsored events such as district conferences with the Home and School Association. CECEN was able to blend in with all other kinds of programs and subjects. For instance, the program staff attended several articulation meetings between the Day Care and kindergarten program staffs.

Monitoring Reports (about the training program) improved and were a useful summary of the year's events. One of the more successful parts of the training component was the work in the schools, some of which ran really big programs with volunteers. Also, School Community Coordinators were very helpful in joining efforts with program staff.

2. What could have made the program run better?

In some schools that had the CECEN program there was no background for having volunteers. Sometimes though in these same schools the number of volunteers increased. Hopefully, this will set a new trend in those schools. However, in some cases parents were exploited. The situation could have improved if parents were valued more for their own abilities and if more new parents were involved. Also, one of the program's difficulties was that the Network couldn't tell schools or parents what to do.

One of the really fortunate things that happened was that the first Program Director had been a principal; this experience in that area proved invaluable in getting the program going in the schools. Another, good thing about the program was having the Pre-School Speech and Hearing Clinic included. Its Program Manager has been a good administrator and an excellent therapist. It was

a small operation that did a lot of good work. The other therapists were good and the staff has done a fine job showing parents helpful skills and alerting them to their children's needs. It is good that the program will continue under Title VI funding.

A third good thing about the program was that the evaluation was well conducted because there was a resident evaluator. As a new Research Intern the evaluator was not as skilled in the job perhaps as someone with more educational and vocational experience, but she was friendly and communicated well with parents and school staff.

3. What's the legacy of the program?

Contact with various offices has already been mentioned but these were some additional groups: Kindergarten Supervisors, The Office of Volunteer Services, Home and School Council and over 3,000 parents involved each year for a total of at least 6,000 over the course of the program. As a result more parents were involved in schools because of CECEN.

Also, the operation of CECEN has allowed Kindergarten supervisors and collaborators to expand their activities. And, although CECEN has ended there were specific programs in specific schools to be continued such as diagnostic programs, parent visitation (by parents) programs, listening and learning centers which were set up by parents and kindergarten extension/childcare volunteer

programs. In addition, some of the advisory councils will continue to operate. Also to be noted: there were dozens of parents who received jobs through the Network. These were just some of the major things that resulted from the program.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Network (CECEN), a Title III (E.S.E.A.) program provided information on existing approaches to early childhood education in Philadelphia and opportunities for development of alternative approaches to staff and parental participation in early childhood education, emphasizing greater parental involvement. The program operated in decentralized form in eight public districts and the parochial schools (which received 25% of the funds). Each had a District Advisory Council (DAC) composed of at least 75% parents and community, plus principal and teacher representatives. Special Education (which received 20% of the funds) had a professional and a parent representative on each DAC. The DAC and the District Superintendent were responsible for:

(1) district-level dissemination

(2) district based training for parents (on whom at least 40% of the district's allotted funds had to be spent) and professionals in selected "target schools"

(3) locally designed monitoring to evaluate the district program

A Network Resource Teacher (NRT) worked in the district to carry out its programs. A city-wide committee was responsible for overseeing the entire program.

This final evaluation report on CECEN focused on four principal areas identified, in terms of the major findings associated with each, as follows:

I. General Enabling Objectives: The evaluation centered

on verifying whether or not the various planning documents were submitted, and that the scheduled committee meetings and other events occurred. All of these objectives were met.

II. Specific objectives by component:

A. Dissemination

The program met most of the objectives specified for the dissemination component by the districts. The eight public school districts and the parochial schools (considered a 9th district) had selected specific activities to be performed in this area, with the following results:

(a) All five districts which had planned to publish newsletters accomplished this.

(b) Conferences at the district level occurred as planned in the parochial schools and the six public school districts which indicated this in their dissemination plan.

(c) News articles were submitted by three districts, but five had indicated this as part of their plan in this area.

(d) All three districts which had indicated they intended to keep the Home and School Association informed about the program did so.

B. Training Plans submitted by seventy-three of the 80 program schools contained schedules for training sessions, workshops, and visits to schools for observation of early childhood programs in action. Most of the schools mentioned these four objectives for their plans:

> To build better communications between home and school.
>
> To make parents aware of early childhood development.
>
> To involve more parents in schools.
>
> To improve students' basic skills with parental help.

Virtually all of the 56 schools that reported on their accomplishments in this area indicated they met their objectives. One of the weak areas of the program continued to be, however, that it was not able to involve more parents with more consistency in the training. But for those parents who did participate the involvement was reported as rewarding for them and the schools.

Evaluation of the training component was done in this manner:

Twelve schools were selected by stratified random sampling (one per public district; four parochial, at least two special education) for concentration; a training session observation checklist, and a classroom observation checklist were used, as well as questionnaires and interviews.

For the remaining schools there was an examination of reports sent in by the schools regarding attainment of objectives, as noted above.

Some of the major findings based on observations of training sessions in the twelve schools were (1) that a total of 245 parents attend the sessions throughout the program, (2) that most of the training sessions seemed to focus upon methods for improving students' behavior or on basic or readiness skills, (3) that information provided by the training was new to parents, and (4) that sessions were interesting enough in most instances to hold the attention of participants.

As a part of training, parents were expected to volunteer time in the classroom. However, in the twelve schools, only half the number of parents who were asked to volunteer actually worked with students. Still, when parents volunteered consistently (this took place in eight of the twelve schools) the school staff appeared to welcome their help.

Monitoring Reports submitted by the DAC's offered another form of feedback to determine how well the program's objectives were accomplished in the areas of training, dissemination and the operation of the DAC's. Some of the most commonly reported findings were: training in the district went as planned, parents felt more welcome in schools, and dissemination improved.

III. The Speech and Hearing Component:

The Manager of the Speech and Hearing Program indicated that all of the objectives (each focusing on some aspect of clinical testing and consultation) were met. It was reported by parents that the therapy provided in the program was helpful to their children and that the additional instruction they received for working with their children at home was effective also.

IV. Interviews with Network Resource Teachers and the Program Manager:

The resource teachers and the manager concurred that CECEN, while not being able to establish the ideal level of parent involvement it intended, had been successful overall and would continue to have an influence beyond the existence of the program.

V. Conclusion

CECEN, in terms of its general and component objectives, generally operated according to plan. Due to increased levels of parental and staff experience, not only the DAC's but CECEN staff as well were able to transact operations more effectively than ever. The program is expected to continue to have an impact even without funding.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Training Session Observation Check-List

1) Topic of session attended _____

2) Number of parents attending _____

3) Number of staff attending _____

4) The presentation was
   a) _____ essentially a repetition of earlier presentations in this area
   b) _____ a source of new information in this area

5) The presentation seemed
   a) _____ to hold the interest of participants
   b) _____ not to hold the interest of participants

6) Number of participants asking questions _____

7) Number of participants answering questions _____

8) Number of participants
   a) _____ offering suggestions
   b) _____ offering solutions to problems

9) Did the workshop require participants to construct some form of instructional material?

10) Additional Comments:

Appendix B

Classroom Observation Check-List (1 hour per class)

Which tasks were parents observed doing in the classroom?

Time Spent

Clerical Work

Cleaning up and arranging materials

School activities outside the classroom

Handling discipline problems apart from instruction

	Subject Matter	Media	#Children on Task	#Children told to pay Attention	#Children told to keep quiet
Planning instruction with the teacher					
Instructing the whole class (# students____)					
Instructing small groups (# students___)					
Instructing individual children (tutoring)					

Other

Comments

Appendix (C)

Parent Interview Questions

1. What kinds of training sessions which were sponsored by the Network Program have you attended this year?

2. Have the training sessions been valuable to you? (If so, how? If not, why not?)

Appendix D

Teacher Interview

What effect has training through the Network had on parents in your school?

a. Have parents learned additional skills? (If so, what?)

b. Have parents developed greater self-confidence in working with you and in working with the students?

c. Have parents gained better skills in working with children in the classroom? (If so, what?)

d. Have parents' interests changed? (If so, how?) (Do they ask questions, seek out information, perform tasks differently?)

e. Has training clarified parents' ideas of what education should do for children? (If so, how?)

f. Do parents do things on their own initiative in your classroom? If so, please give examples.

g. Have parents changed the kinds of things they do with their own children at home?

h. Have there been any negative effects of the training program.

Do you have anything else to say?

Appendix E

Principal Interview

1. What effect has training had on the parents involved in it?

   a) Have the parents learned additional skills? (If so, what?)

   b) Have parents developed greater self-confidence in working with teachers and with working with the students?

   c) Have parents gained better skills in working with children in the classroom? (If so, what?)

   d) Have parents interests changed? (If so, how?) (Do they ask questions, seek out information, perform tasks differently?)

   e) Has training clarified parents' ideas of what education should do for the children? (If so, how?)

   f) Do parents initiate activities in the classrooms in your school? If so, please give examples.

   g) Have parents changed in the kinds of things they do with their own children at home?

   h) Have there been any negative effects on the school?

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Appendix F

Questionnaire for Parents of Speech and Hearing Students

1. Have the sessions been helpful to your child?

   Yes _____ No _____

2. Do you work at home with your child?

   Yes _____ No _____

3. Does the teacher offer helpful solutions to problems your child might have with the lesson?

   Yes _____ No _____

4. Do you have any suggestions for the program?

   Additional comments: